

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL ASMARA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 082759

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS

SUBJECT: CISCO 3

1. IN MARCH 3 MEETING IN KHARTOUM PLF REPS TOLD EMBASSY OFFICERS THAT PLF WOULD RELEASE STEVEN CAMPBELL AND JAMES HARRELL IN ABOUT 15 DAYS. (CABLE REPORTING THIS MEETING BEING REPEATED TO ACTION ADDRESSEES.) RELEASE, HOWEVER, HAS NOT TAKEN PLACE, AND RECENT PLF CONFERENCE IN KHARTOUM, WHICH PROBABLY INCLUDED DISCUSSIONS OF RELEASE QUESTION, HAS ENDED WITHOUT FIRM INDICATIONS AS TO CURRENT PLF INTENTIONS ON THIS ISSUE.

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2. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES WE BELIEVE IT MIGHT BE USEFUL

TO RAISE ISSUE DIRECTLY AGAIN WITH PLF OFFICIAL, OSMAN SABBE SALEH, WHO WAS AT KHARTOUM CONFERENCE AND WHO HAS INDICATED THAT HE FAVORS UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF THE CAPTIVES. ACCORDING TO BEST INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US, SABBE HAS LEFT KHARTOUM. WOULD APPRECIATE ACTION ADDRESSEES DETERMINING WHETHER SABBE IS IN THEIR CITY AND, IF SO, TRYING TO ARRANGE A DIRECT MEETING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BY AN EMBASSY OFFICER WITH HIM. AT SUCH MEETING, EMBASSY OFFICER SHOULD TAKE FOLLOWING LINE:

(A) CITE MARCH 3 ASSURANCES BY PLF REPS IN KHARTOUM TO EMBASSY OFFICIALS THERE THAT CISCO 2 WOULD BE RELEASED IN 15 DAYS.

(B) NOTE THAT SABBE HIMSELF HAD STATED IN FEB. 19 LETTER TO CONGRESSMAN REUSS THAT MEN WOULD BE RELEASED SOON. ON BASIS OF THIS LETTER REUSS HAD ASSURED CAPTIVES' FAMILIES THAT RELEASE WOULD TAKE PLACE SHORTLY. FAMILIES HAD PUT GREAT STOCK IN THIS ASSURANCE AND ARE AT A LOSS WHY RELEASE HAS NOT BEEN EFFECTED.

(C) URGE THAT CAMPBELL AND HARRELL BE PROMPTLY AND UNCONDITIONALLY RELEASED ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS, AND EXPRESS HOPE THAT RONALD MICHALKE, BEING HELD BY ELF, WILL BE RELEASED ON SAME GROUNDS.

3. FOR KHARTOUM: WE BELIEVE THAT GOS PREFERENCE THAT WE NOT MEET DIRECTLY WITH PLF REP (KHARTOUM 930) SHOULD NOT BAR US FROM HOLDING SUCH MEETING OUTSIDE SUDAN.

4. FOR BEIRUT: SUPPORT FOR AMBASSADOR BROWN'S MISSION MUST OF COURSE REMAIN YOUR HIGHEST PRIORITY. KISSINGER

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